

Shrewsbury School Journal

Serving a community of continuous learners

Spring Edition 2013 • Vol XVII No. 3

Superintendent's Corner Results require resources

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
SUPERINTENDENT

"The social sectors do not have rational capital markets that channel resources to those who deliver the best results." ~ Tom Tierney, quoted by Jim Collins in *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*

As the budget process for the next fiscal year heads to its final stage at Town Meeting, it is clear that our school district will face another difficult year next year. I am grateful that the recommended budget will not require the schools to make even deeper cuts. However, we will not have the capacity to recover from the reductions we sustained during the current year, which have increased class sizes well beyond where they should be in a significant majority of our classrooms across the district; reduced academic offerings; and limited much-needed investment in textbooks, technology and teacher training. The district will also continue to lack capacity to adequately address the significant mental and behavioral health challenges manifested in too many of our students.

Of course, if the quote above weren't true, our school district would have plenty of resources, because we are among a very small percentage of school districts who deliver superior results. Recently, US News & World Report named Shrewsbury High School as a Silver Medalist, ranking 630th out of more than 21,000 high schools, or the top 3% in the nation; the same process ranks SHS 27th out of 358 high schools in Massachusetts, or the top 8% in the state. Neighborhood Scout, a new national data clearinghouse for the real estate market, uses a methodology that takes the relative strength of public education in individual states. It ranks our school district as "better than 99.8% of US school districts" and "better than 96.6% of Massachusetts school districts." The same organization ranks

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Road Scholars 5k Fun Run, Staff Retirements and Green Thumbs

inside • pages 5, 6 & 7

Sherwood Middle School Dedication Celebration, Future Scientists and Engineers and a Visit to the Wax Museum



Pictured above (left-right) are Moira Shott, Charlie Prince and Ethan Frick reading from the theatre scripts/books that were part of the grant "Broadway Here We Come" awarded to Stephanie Halacy at Walter J. Paton School and Camille Viscomi at Beal Early Childhood Center. See related write-up on page 4.

*"Listen to the mustn'ts, child. Listen to the don'ts.
Listen to the shouldn'ts, the impossibles, the won'ts.
Listen to the never haves, then listen close to me...
Anything can happen, child. Anything can be."*

~ Shel Silverstein ~

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Pictured above top row (left and right) are photos of participants in the Road Scholars 5k Fun Run that took place on April 7. See page 2 for details on this annual event that was established as a fundraiser for Shrewsbury Public Schools. On the bottom row, at left, is Max Evers with "Skully" - please see related SEF Grants story on page 3 and additional grant stories on pgs. 4, 6 & 7. The center photo is 4th grade student Ava Mercer dressed as Albert Einstein during the Spring Street School's "Wax Museum" event - please see story on page 6. At far right are students from 5 Silver and from the Life Skills Program at Sherwood Middle School learning about the new permanent composter donated by Mr. Scott Selmecki and the crew from Home Depot. Students transfer their compost from the homemade worm bins to this new donated equipment. Please see story and additional photos on page 4.

School Department budget update

SANDRA FRYC
SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

On May 8, 2013 the School Committee voted a revised budget recommendation of \$52,040,646. This vote was the culmination of a fluid and complex school budget process that began at the end of Town Meeting in May 2012.

On May 21, 2012 then-School Committee chair Erin Canzano advised Town Meeting members that the school budget was in a precarious position, and that the committee was concerned about the long-term consequences to the quality of education in Shrewsbury. Concerns focused on the reduction of 32 positions from the appropriated budget that resulted in students experiencing increased class sizes (predominantly in grades 4-8), the sharing of one principal between Beal and Paton, reduction of half of the curriculum leadership positions at the middle schools, and the Foreign Language Department going without a director for most of the year. The high school had increased class sizes and reduction in programming. Budget constraints limited the district's ability to purchase textbooks, and caused underinvestment in technology and instructional materi-

als. The district is unable to provide appropriate curriculum support and professional development for educators. Unfortunately, bus fees, sports fees and activity fees continue to be a necessity. During recent public hearings the School Committee heard a consistent message of overstressed students and educators. Today there is heightened concern with the continued erosion of the quality of education in our district.

On January 23, 2013 the Superintendent recommended an initial budget of \$54,279,004 for fiscal year 2014, which represented an increase of 8.85% to the appropriated budget over fiscal year 2013. The committee is mindful of the current fiscal constraints faced by the town, but felt it was important for the community to fully understand and appreciate the cost necessary to educate students. The committee classified this as a "need," not a "want" budget. The items identified by the budget proposal focused on restoration of a portion of those educators and administrators reduced in fiscal year 2013, curriculum, instruction and professional development, technology, special education cost increases, operational costs, increased costs for safety and security, as well as contractual and non represented staff salary and wage adjustments. The district's strategic priorities include increasing value to the

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Superintendent's Corner

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each of our individual elementary, middle, and high schools in the top 1 to 2% of the nation, and ranks Paton and Spring Street schools as the 10th and 28th best schools of any kind in the country (and the 1st and 11th elementary schools, respectively). While it is wise to approach any statistical ranking with a healthy dose of caution, given that no one measure can capture the totality of school quality, such rankings do serve as an indicator of relative performance. As such, they show that Shrewsbury's schools are among the best in the United States.

Yet, the level of resources available to our schools is jeopardizing our ability to continue to deliver these results. The research on class size shows that negative effects take time to surface, and we are headed into a second year with class sizes in the high 20s and low 30s, which are much too high. Such conditions not only threaten academic test scores because of the obvious difficulties related to having too many students for one teacher to serve adequately, but they also compromise the overall quality of the classroom environment. We take great pride in the respectful cultures in our schools, which stem from the ability for educators to build strong relationships with students and strong connections with parents. Having too many students and not enough time and resources threatens the very core of what we do to serve our children well.

The fact is that our schools have achieved phenomenal results while our spending is in the lowest 12% of school districts in the state. Our community would have spent over **\$13 million** more dollars last year *just to spend at the average level that school districts in Massachusetts invest in public education. Shrewsbury taxpayers have saved more than \$70 million over the past five years* compared to the state average for school spending, while significantly benefitting from the increase to the value of our property due to the success and reputation of our schools.

Unfortunately, the successes we've achieved are not sustainable given the revenues available, compared to the rising fixed costs of what we are required to provide to students due to state and federal mandates. By not investing adequately in our schools, we are risking the excellent return on the community's investment in education that we have enjoyed, which includes lower juvenile crime rates, student results that enhance property value, attraction of invested families and talented educators, and an improved quality of life for all. Our district has stretched the dollars available by maximizing efficiencies, tapping alternative revenue streams, and focusing on strategic priorities. Unfortunately, we have also been deferring key needs and cutting the very resources we need to meet our core mission. If we do not reverse this trend, the quality of education in Shrewsbury will deteriorate, and that would be bad news for us all.

Shrewsbury School Journal

The non-profit Shrewsbury School Journal is published three times a year and reaches every household in the diverse and growing town of Shrewsbury. It is published by the central office of the Shrewsbury Public Schools with the help and expertise of many individuals. The mission of the Shrewsbury School Journal is to provide an accurate source of information about our school system and the town in which we live. We hope to foster a community of continuous learners.

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer
Superintendent

Mary Beth Banios
Assistant Superintendent

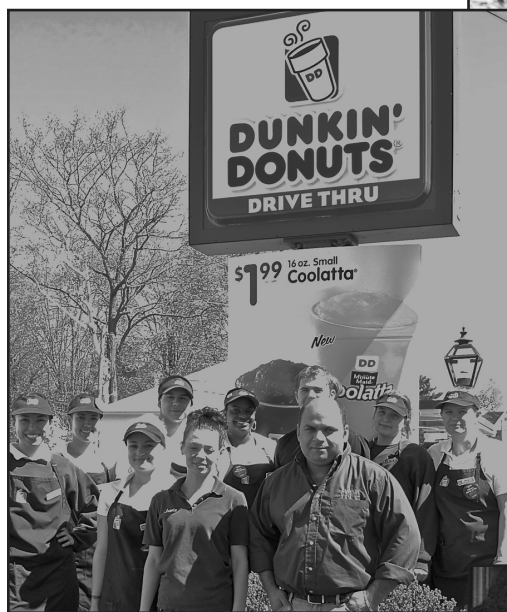
Kimberlee Cantin
Project Coordinator/Designer

Fun and fundraising in the sun

ELIZABETH MCCOLLUM
COORDINATOR OF VOLUNTEER
ACTIVITIES

The sixth annual Shrewsbury Road Scholars 5k/Fun Run was held under sunny skies on Sunday, April 7, at 12:00 noon. We enjoyed our biggest turnout ever with 475 bibs issued to runners and walkers, and 295 participants timed in the 5k.

Revenue from this year's race is estimated at \$11,000, and the Shrewsbury Road Scholars 5k/Fun Run has raised nearly \$60,000 for Shrewsbury Public Schools since its inception. This would not have been possible without the support of local businesses that graciously agreed to sponsor the event.



Pictured above from left to right are Dunkin' Donuts employees Maharany Paiva, Maria Guerres, Amanda Freitas, Elizer Menas, Jamie Kato (Manager), Porsche Kelly, Andrew Cadette (General Manager), Jairo Dossantos (Manager), Amanda Kittredge and Adeline Baha.

To the right are SHARC Shrewsbury Health and Racquet Club and Shrewsbury Sports Center Owner/President, Darline Thorp Yatim and Tom Foutsitzis, Marketing Manager and swim coach with Fitz, the SHARC mascot.

Presenting Sponsors for 2013 were **Avidia Bank, Dunkin' Donuts of Shrewsbury, Fallon Community Health Plan, and SHARC Shrewsbury Health and Racquet Club and Shrewsbury Sports Center.** Supporting Sponsors were **The Law Offices of Joseph J. Cariglia, Darryl Henry Arborist and Landscape Contractor, National Facility Services, Inc., Price Chopper, and Qdoba**



**Presenting Sponsors
for the Road
Scholars 5k /Fun
Run**

Mexican Grill. Food, beverages, and bibs were also donated to the event, and a complete list of sponsors can be found on the race website: shrewsburyroadscholars.org.

This year we would like to send a special "thank you" to the many volunteers who make this event possible. Every year, for the last six years, numerous volunteers have donated their time and talent to a multitude of jobs before and/or during the event. Each year we see old faces and new wanting to help.

Longtime volunteer Dana Canzano had this to say about the event when asked what got him interested, "I wanted to provide an

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In the center photo above from left to right representing Fallon Community Health Plan are Wendy Katz, Brenda Geron and Leah Frantz.

Pictured in the bottom right photo is Avidia Bank Assistant Vice President and Market Manager Pat Smith.

Taking Root at Parker Road

KRISTIN STEWICH
NURSE
PARKER ROAD PRESCHOOL

Through the generosity of the Shrewsbury Education Foundation and their grant program, Parker Road Preschool is creating a school vegetable garden that is engaging all of the children by providing an interactive environment to observe, discover, experiment and learn. School gardens create opportunities for children to be active outdoors, discover fresh food, make healthier food choices, and become better nourished.

Nutrition education at the preschool level can prove instrumental in influencing the development of healthy eating habits through hands-on activities. When children learn where food comes from, how it is grown, have hands on experiences and use their senses to understand it, they are more likely to taste new foods and accept them as part of their diet and build a foundation of lifelong healthy choices.

Our goals and objectives for Taking Root at Parker Road have been

to establish a working garden where each classroom would grow a different vegetable and that the students would learn the nutritional value of some of these vegetables. Additionally, they would be participating in

Since receiving the grant from the Shrewsbury Education Foundation, two area businesses have offered to partner with Parker Road to enhance our already exciting project!

physical activity by working in the garden, building a sense of community, fostering social interaction, self esteem and a connection with nature.

Since receiving the grant from the Shrewsbury Education Foundation, two area businesses have offered to partner with Parker Road to enhance our already exciting project! The Shrewsbury Home Depot first learned of our plans to construct a garden early

in the process. They asked to visit Parker Road to learn more about our vision for our garden project. They toured the facility inside and out, measured tables and devised a plan to construct "garden workshops" for each classroom. In February the workshops were delivered and equipped by Home Depot with seed starter kits, seeds, watering cans, grow lights – everything needed to plant our garden! Mr. David Bottom, a retired school teacher and Home Depot associate, volunteered his time and has visited each classroom to teach the children about planting seeds and tending a garden.

Collaborating with The Shrewsbury Health and Racquet Club (SHARC), two workshops exclusively for families of Parker Road Preschool were held at the Shrewsbury Home Depot. The workshops included information for parents and children on nutrition and home gardening. The children were able to construct a birdhouse or similar project. The workshops were an overwhelming success with well over 80 families attending.

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Thank you to our retiring teachers

BARBARA A. MALONE
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Thirteen educators are coming to the end of their education careers after having served the children of Shrewsbury for a combined total of 375 years. This represents an average of over 28 years of service in Shrewsbury for these retirees. Each of these talented educators will be recognized at an upcoming School Committee meeting for their commitment and dedication to the children of Shrewsbury. Listed below are the names, position, school and years of service to Shrewsbury. We wish them a happy, healthy, and relaxing retirement!

Joyce Avery
43 years in education, 26 in Shrewsbury, at Coolidge School and at the middle school level, most recently teaching English Language Arts and Social Studies at the Sherwood Middle School.



Joanne Billings
36 years in education, 22 in Shrewsbury, all as a middle school math teacher, most recently at Oak Middle School.



Marie Cadigan
34 years in education, all in Shrewsbury, in the Special Education department, most recently as the Out-of-District Coordinator.



James "Tack" Chace
43 years in education, 25 years in Shrewsbury, all at the High School teaching Social Sciences.



Judith DelSignore
43 years in education, 36 in Shrewsbury, first as a resource teacher and then as a middle school math teacher, most recently teaching math and science at Sherwood Middle School.



Marsha DiPilato
16 years of service in education, all in Shrewsbury, as a teaching assistant and then kindergarten teacher at the Beal Early Childhood Center.



Catherine Duchesneau
37 years of service in education, all in Shrewsbury. Began as a reading specialist at Beal, and also served as a teacher at Spring Street School and most recently as a social studies teacher at Oak Middle School.



Laura Jonaitis
34 years of service in education, all in Shrewsbury, most recently as a health teacher at Floral Street School and Sherwood Middle School.



Richard Marchand
35 years of service in education, 21 years in Shrewsbury. Began as a long term substitute teacher and became a full time health teacher at the High School.



Stephanie Moran
34 years of service in education, 25 years in Shrewsbury. Began as a special needs resource teacher and then became a teacher at the middle school level, serving most recently as an English language arts teacher at Oak Middle School.



Brian Paquette
32 years in education, 30 years in Shrewsbury. Served as an Art teacher at the middle school level, most recently at Sherwood Middle School.



Deborah Reidy
40 years in education, all in Shrewsbury. Served at Spring Street School and most recently at Sherwood Middle School, as a special education teacher.



Jayne Wilkin
34 years of service in education, 29 years in Shrewsbury. Served as a school psychologist and adjustment counselor at Coolidge school, Assistant Special Education Director, and finally Principal of Paton School from 2003 to present. *We owe an extra debt of gratitude to Ms. Wilkin for serving as Principal of both Paton School and the Beal Early Childhood Center for the 2012-2013 school year.*



Opportunities granted from SEF

SHIRLEY LEMAY
HEALTH AND ADAPTIVE
PHYS. ED. TEACHER

My name is Shirley LeMay. I teach Elementary Health for grades 2 and 4 for half of my week and Adaptive Physical Education for grades 1 - 12 for the other half. I was thrilled to be selected as a Shrewsbury Education Foundation (SEF) grant winner in the 2011-2012 school year! I received a 2-part grant. The first part was for a life-sized human torso model, and the second part for a live-sized skeleton. These models help to enhance my Health lessons tremendously.

For the first part of my grant, "Manny", our human torso, helps bring to life the human digestive system and

circulatory system for young students. Second graders are expected to learn about the path of digestion including the mouth, the esophagus, the stomach, and the small and large intestines. They are also expected to know about the heart, arteries, veins, and blood

"I was thrilled to be selected as an SEF grant winner!"

flow. Our human torso model comes with parts for the digestive and circulatory systems, as well as the respiratory, nervous, and excretory systems. The parts are removable, allowing students to manipulate them while making an association with their own bodies.

Little second graders think that every-

thing between their neck and their waist is their "tummy". Try to teach them about the path of digestion when they will never be able to see any piece of it! They also picture their heart to look like a Valentine and have a hard time being able to visualize arteries and veins carrying blood to and from it without ever being able to see or touch any of it. They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Well, a life-sized model of the human torso with parts that can be handled and taken apart is worth a million!

For the second part of my grant, we now have "Skully". There is no doubt about it; nobody will ever see his or her own skeleton. That's why it is so important when teaching fourth graders about the skeletal system to have a good

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Budget

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community, engaging and challenging all learners, enhancing learning through technology, and promoting health and wellness. The School Committee continued to use these priorities to govern the formulation of the budget that would meet the educational needs of all students.

The Town Manager's initial school department budget increase for FY14 was \$355,213. Because of increased fixed costs, the School Committee indicated that a budget increase in this amount would have meant disastrous reductions in personal and program and the district simply would not be able to deliver a quality education. Fortunately, as the budget process evolved, additional funding was recommended for addition to the School Department budget by our Town Manager, and ultimately the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee agreed to recommend the current budget request of \$52,040,646, which represents a carry forward/level service recommendation. The School Committee is extremely grateful that additional funding was allocated to the school budget; however, it is important to note that the current budget recommendation means there will be no improvements to class size, no new funds for technology, and no funds for improvement to programs. Frankly, the School Committee believes the district will continue to tread water during the 2013-2014 school year. We are conscientious of the needs of all town departments and the limited resources to meet the services needs of the community; however, as elected members of the School Committee we must advocate for the education of 6,000 students. Over the past ten years significant cuts in personnel and reduction in programming have made it increasingly difficult to provide the level of education students deserve and the public expects.

What is on the horizon for the Shrewsbury Public Schools? The School Committee is hopeful the revised school budget will be approved at Town Meeting. We are committed to start work on the FY15 budget as soon as the 2013 Town Meeting concludes. As we wrap up one budget cycle, we see another difficult budget process lining up for fiscal year 2015. We believe that the school district must begin restoring educators and programs cut over the past few years in order for the district to continue to provide students with the education they need to be successful. Continued collaboration between the various town boards is needed in order to provide increased revenue so that the school district will not see further erosion.

The School Committee remains dedicated to continuing to provide educational services that are efficient and effective and provide exceptional value to the Town of Shrewsbury. Our children are the future of this community and we must do all we can to provide them with a quality education.



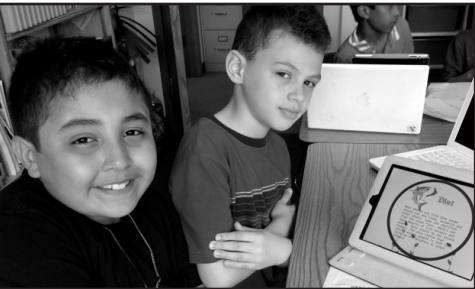
The Shrewsbury Celebration in the Garden Party Host Committee is pleased to announce its Fifth Annual Garden Party to benefit Shrewsbury Public Schools, Saturday, June 15, 2013, 6:30 PM, at the home of Heather and Jason Logrippo, the Fallon House, 4 Prospect Road.

In its first four years, nearly \$100,000 has been raised. The Committee aims to raise half of that amount this time around. Five for 50!!! Entertainment provided by local dance-rock band, Tension. Pepper's Fine Catering will be serving a sumptuous menu, and tickets are \$65 per person. For Sponsorship, auction or ticket information, please visit www.shrewsburygardenparty.com.

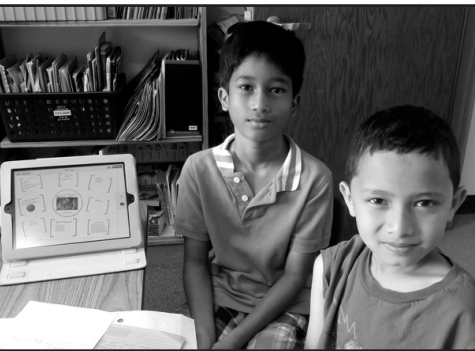
Student empowerment

AMY CLOUTER
CALVIN COOLIDGE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
KITTY RAYMOND
ESL TEACHER

Thanks to a grant from Shrewsbury Education Foundation, a special program called Empowering ELLs with iPads is underway at Calvin Coolidge Elementary School. Kitty Raymond, ESL teacher at Coolidge School, works with students to improve their proficiency in written and spoken English. This year Ms. Raymond explored a wide range of apps designed to elicit and showcase students' communication skills. Then she put them to good work in Coolidge classrooms. Most recently, the children in the photos below teamed up to create a presentation using an application called Prezi. They chose a topic, researched, planned, designed and finally presented their work using this tool. Final projects (featuring statements, headers and visuals) will convey the important information these learners gleaned to classmates and other audiences alike.



Pictured above (left-right) are third grade students Arthur Gomes and Carlos Fraga. Their presentation on sharks included habitat, diet, and physical appearance.



Pictured above (left-right) are third grade students Shashin Kunduru and Prashan Adhikari. Their presentation topic is "Wild Tigers".

CAMILLE VISCOMI
BEAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER TEACHER

Our grant from Shrewsbury Education Foundation "Broadway Here We Come" introduces the element of drama into literacy learning and magically transforms the classroom into a stage. When children enter kindergarten and first grade they come into the classroom with varying learning styles, abilities and often English as a second language. These theatre scripts/books accommodate emergent readers in kindergarten through first grade and allow for differentiation among each reading level. They provide high interest and allow varied reading levels to read the same script. This is a great opportunity since often children at lower reading levels do not have the quality of a more elaborate story and they often are upset since they can see that their texts are not at the same level as their peers. The different characters basically dictate the reading level providing all levels to read the same script. Every time I took a reading group- they enthusiastically said, "Can I do it?" or "I can't wait to do the play."

Plenty of green thumbs

CAROL VIRZI
SHERWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL
TEACHER

At Sherwood Middle School, students in the Green Squad Student Voice Crew have started a pilot composting program. The Green Squad is working with the Life Skills Program, as well as two fifth grade teams, 5 Silver and 5 Orange, by recycling their fruit, veggie, and grain food scraps from snack time to create compost. The compost bins are comprised of Red Wrigglers that were donated by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection under the Green Team program. Students are feeding the worms lots of veggies, and compost will be generated soon. The compost will be donated to the Parker Road Preschool, under the program title "BIG SEEDS HELPING LITTLE SEEDS!"

In addition to this initiative, the Life Skills program is starting their raised bed garden project in order to grow and harvest fruits and veggies for their snack time. The students will have a hands-on opportunity to learn about gardening, composting, and food preparation for their vocational training. Lastly, in coordination with the Green Squad, who will be helping them with their gardening, the students will have

wonderful experiences with peer collaboration. Elizabeth Camire, teacher, and Kathy Mangan, paraprofessional, have been leading this wonderful endeavor. SMS would like to thank Alison Gray Ricker, Diana Karas, and Gail Aslanian from the Shrewsbury Garden Club for their help with our Gardening Projects at SMS. They are providing SMS with invaluable assistance with planning our raised beds. Also, the SGC has so generously donated \$200 to the Green Squad for purchasing gardening materials and supplies to help with town beautification.

The Green Squad students, in collaboration with the Life Skills students, are maintaining the planters at the Shrewsbury Post Office for the Town Beautification Committee as their community service project for the year. Thank you, again, to Shrewsbury Garden Club! Lastly, Home Depot is partnering with SMS to kindly donate supplies and materials to set up our raised bed gardens. Scott Selmecki, the Store Manager of Home Depot in Shrewsbury is sharing his expertise to begin our SMS Gardening Project, which we are modeling on the highly



Rocco Ragaini pictured above helps Mrs. Lavery drill aeration holes in their new homemade worm composting bins on 5 Silver.

Taking Root

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Pictured above is Jameson Miranda planting seeds in seed starters at the Garden Workshop area with Victoria Santiago looking on in the background.

Pictured at right is Mr. David Bottom from Home Depot demonstrating seed planting in the seed starter kits that were supplied by Home Depot to the students in Ms. Marchand's class at Parker Road Preschool.

Just recently another member from our community, SELCO, learned about Taking Root at Parker Road and is donating two blueberry bushes as part of their annual Arbor Day program. We are looking forward to planting these bushes and enjoying fresh blueberries! We are currently sprouting spinach, swiss chard, radishes, peppers, tomatoes, beans and more! The children arrive at school each day excited to see the progress their garden is making. We are surely building a foundation of lifelong healthy choices and promoting good nutrition. It is more crucial than ever to foster fitness and healthy eating at an early age. Building our school garden and working with The Home Depot and SHARC has been a rewarding experience for the children, parents and staff of our school. Their dedication to the community and young people should be applauded.



A dedication event with class

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
SUPERINTENDENT
DR. JANE O. LIZOTTE
SHERWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL
PRINCIPAL

The new Sherwood Middle School was dedicated on April 5, 2013. Many local and state officials attended the event, including State Treasurer Steve Grossman, who chairs the Massachusetts School Building Authority, along with that agency’s executive director, Jack McCarthy, State Senator Michael O. Moore, and State Representative Matthew Beaton, along with members of the Sherwood

Building Committee, the School Committee, the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee, and Town Department Heads. The Sherwood students were an extremely respectful audience, and many of them participated in the ceremony, including Carl Lund (Grade 5) and Rachel Muratore (Grade 5) who led the Pledge of Allegiance; John Miwanda (Grade 6), who sang the National Anthem; Luke DeFlumeri (Grade 5) and Paulina Hruskoci (Grade 6), who read their winning essays about “What the New Sherwood Means to Me,” and the Sixth Grade Orchestra, Sixth Grade

Band, and Fifth and Sixth Chorus, who all performed musical selections. Fifth grader Avi Mahal and sixth grader Caroline Birney presented the dedication of the new Sherwood Middle School to the current and future Sherwood students and to all the members of the Shrewsbury community in appreciation for providing this wonderful facility for learning. The full text of the dedication is below.
On behalf of the school district, we express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported the project and who worked so hard to design and build this excellent school.

Sherwood Middle School Dedication

On this day, Friday, April 5th, 2013, we hereby dedicate our new Sherwood Middle School to the current and future 5th and 6th grade students in our Shrewsbury community, each of whom will use this beautiful, innovative building to learn, to grow, and to discover the world around them.
We also dedicate our new school to members of the Shrewsbury community. We know that both children and adults will benefit from the opportunity to use its learning spaces, meeting areas, gymnasium, and fields.
We appreciate the beautiful, innovative design of this new school’s learning spaces, and we appreciate having enough space to do our work well. We appreciate the technology that provides incredible opportunities for us to learn and to create. We appreciate the special areas where we will become musicians, artists, researchers, engineers, linguists, and athletes. We appreciate that we now have a school building that will help us aspire to be students who exemplify the mission of our school, as signified by the Touchstone of Sherwood Middle School, which is:

Sherwood Middle School
is a community
of independent learners
who treat others respectfully
and responsibly.

At our school,
students and faculty
stand up for what we
believe in,
celebrate our differences,
and make learning fun.

Our positive attitudes
create a path to success.

At Sherwood Middle School,
we persevere and
confidently strive to do our best.

We learn from our mistakes
and understand
the importance of honesty.

We are a community
whose core values
lead the way.

On behalf of all of the students, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire community and everyone who worked to create the new Sherwood Middle School. We thank you for valuing our education by providing us with this wonderful new school building that will support our academic and social development, so that we have the skills and knowledge we need to succeed in the 21st century. Thank you, Shrewsbury!



Pictured above are Mr. Jack McCarthy, Executive Director of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) on left and Mr. Steve Grossman, State Treasurer, on right just prior to their tour of the new building given by Sherwood Middle School grade 5 students Abby Moberg, left and Gabrielle Constantine, right.

Pictured below is the entire assembly at the dedication inside the gymnasium/auditorium. Nearly 1,000 students, plus town and state dignitaries, teachers and other invited guests were on hand for the ceremony, followed by student led-tours.



Photo credit - Sean Brennan of Lamoureux Pagano Associates Architects

Fun & fundraising

CONTINUED from page 2

event for others to participate in and ‘get them moving’ and the fundraising aspect is such a great cause.” He also explained that a highlight for him is, “...seeing the community come together and watching the finish line and seeing the people cheering on the finishers, regardless of time.”
Planning committee members/volunteers for 2013 included: Katie Fox, Jane Lizotte, Ann Jones, Andrea Collins, Darlene Noonan, Alicia Garbarino, Kate MacCausland, Karen Gutekanst, Kelly Robinson, Mark Murray, Viji Ramanath, Michelle Melick, Alison Kiefer, and Dana



Photo credit - Dana Canzano

Pictured above are volunteers Kate MacCausland (sitting) and Eileen Juair (standing) distributing bibs and t-shirts to participants who pre-registered for the race.

Canzano. On race day, volunteers were recruited to safeguard the routes, register runners, and distribute t-shirts, medals, and food. Race Day Volunteers included: Pat, Meghan, and Haley Collins, Srinu Sitaraman, Linda McQuade, Erin Hruskoci, Carol Virzi, Jayne Wilkin, Heather, Ed, and Jordan Gablaski, Dave and Elena Lizotte, Bryan Mabie, Bernie Witkowski, Lauren Ineson, Christina Geromini, Rachel St.



Photo credit - Dana Canzano

Pictured above are planning committee members Mark Murray (also race emcee) and Karen Gutekanst distributing awards at the finish line.

Pierre, Katherine Swaim, Jake Kiefer, and Eileen Juair. Students from Carol Virzi and Diane Lavery’s 5 Silver team made beautiful hand-written thank-you cards for our sponsors, and Greg Marceau assisted in setting up the sound equipment.

Shrewsbury Public Schools provides transportation to all students in the district as well as in-town private schools and Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS JUNE 3, 2013 BY 4:30 PM.

Please refer to our website for details regarding procedures, policies and fees or phone 508-841-7909.



SEF Grants

Each year the Shrewsbury Education Foundation awards grants under the following criteria taken from the website:

Grant applications will be evaluated and ranked using the following metrics:

- Creativity and Innovation
 - Clarity of Goals and Objectives
 - Quality and Longevity of Impact
 - Evaluation Plan
 - Realistic Budget
 - Collaborative Effort (is encouraged and recognized but not required)
 - Quality of Presentation
- Projects should meet as many of the following criteria as appropriate:**
- Involve as many students as possible
 - Stimulate creativity in or out of the classroom
 - Meet students' needs and increase motivation to learn
 - Encourage unique ideas
 - Enhance or enrich the curriculum

- Purposes of the program are to:**
- Develop new resources for schools
 - Encourage extraordinary curricula

The SEF Grant Winners for 2012-2013 school year are:

Kristine Gustafson and Ann Early - *Interactive Math Tools* - Walter J. Paton Elementary School

Kristin Stewich - *Taking Root at Parker* - Parker Road Preschool

Carol Virzi - *From Colonies to Constitution* - Sherwood Middle School

Heidi Richard and Kara Frankian - *Global Education and Our Core Values* - Floral Street Elementary School

Ellen O'Leary, Suzanne Margiano and Cara Demoga - *Strengthening the School Community through social thinking and self regulation* - Floral Street Elementary School

Kitty Raymond and students - *Empowering ELL's with iPads* - Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Rabecca Moisan and Jean Marie Johnson - *Documenting Student Success* - Shrewsbury High School

Scott Bartholomew and Paul Wood - *Manufacturing Interest in Engineering* - Shrewsbury High School

Shari Fox - *Drawing Tablets* - Shrewsbury High School

Shirley LeMay - *Going Ape for A.P.E.* Floral Street and Spring Street, Elementary and Sherwood and Oak Street Middle Schools

District News

Shrewsbury Food Services has been mixing it up with recipe contests, ticket purchase discount promotions, and giveaways at all the schools. Please check out the new newsletter on our website main page under the "Departments - Food Services" pull down menu.

The last day of school for 2012-2013 as of this printing is Thursday, June 20, 2013. The 2013-2014 School Calendar has been approved and the first day for students is Tuesday, August 27, 2013. Check our website under "Quick-LINKS" for the full calendar.

- Important public event -**
- We welcome and encourage you to attend or watch the **School Committee meetings. The meeting dates are as follows:** May 29 and June 5. All meetings are held at 7:00pm in the Selectmen's Room at the Town Hall, 100 Maple Ave. They are televised live on Channel 29 (SETV) or you can access recordings on the Shrewsbury Media Connections Online Library on the town's website.

Tomorrow's scientists & engineers

DAVID HRUSKOCI
SCIENCE DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR
CATHERINE ZHANG
SHS 11TH GRADE STUDENT

Where will the scientists and engineers of tomorrow come from? Shrewsbury of course!

In 2007 Shrewsbury High School held its first annual Science Fair. In that year "Research Methods" courses were introduced to provide students with support in completing science fair projects. Independent projects provide students the opportunity to investigate an area of interest that may or may not be covered in their content courses. Current 11th grader Catherine Zhang recalls, "When I signed up for Research Methods my freshman year, I didn't want to pursue a career in any field resembling science. Up until science fair, my exposure to science was through a textbook, and one-dimensional. Science fair gave me the unique opportunity of conducting my own research independently in a field I found interesting."

This year over 30 local engineers, doctors, scientists, professors and enthusiasts volunteered their time to speak with the students and evaluate their projects in the categories of technical methods, creativity, oral presentation, and documentation. Catherine adds, "My freshman year, I had a judge from the EPA who asked many questions about the actual environmental friendliness of the biodegradable plastics [I had worked with]. I think that the most rewarding aspect of science fair is the people. I have learned from my judges, especially as most of them work in a field similar to my research. Speaking to people who are experts in the field is a rewarding and unique experience that science fair provides."

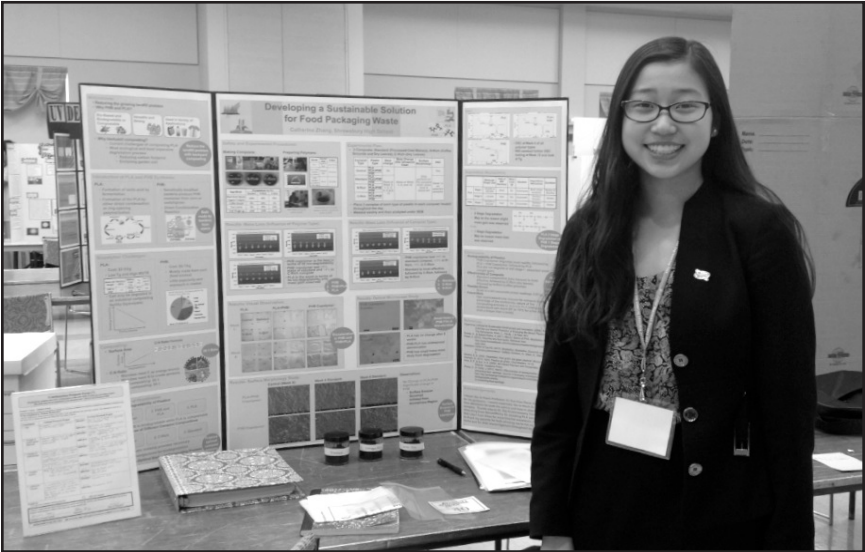
Nearly 50 students participated in the School fair last February, totaling over 250 students since 2007. Each year, only the top twelve projects are able to advance from SHS to the regional fair at WPI. SHS earned 3rd place this year at the regional exhibition with 8 of the 12 students earning an award. Regional award winners then move on to the State Fair at MIT. This was Zhang's third year advancing to the State level. Each year she has varied her experimentation on biodegradable plastics. Reflecting on her first visit, "I couldn't fathom the talent of my fellow competitors.

Students are working at an almost professional level, conducting very promising research."

In May Shrewsbury High School celebrated the 51st student to advance to the State level and the 31st to win a state award. And this year 10th grader Nathaniel Mahowald became the 6th SHS student to earn a prestigious first place award in the last 7 years. Thus 61% of the SHS students who win an award at the Regional Fair go on to earn one at the State level. For Zhang,

ous work, "Effectiveness of Biodegradable Plastic in Preventing Food Spoilage" published in The Journal of Emerging Investigators (March 20, 2012). And our 2013 SHS State Science Fair Award Winners carried out the following research. Brace yourself! These probably aren't the experiments you remember doing when you were in high school.

Nathaniel Mahowald, Grade 10, 1st place
Nucleated, Not Stirred
The goal of this project was to



Pictured above is Catherine Zhang at the regional science fair this year. Catherine has performed very well during her 3 years of high school focusing all her research on biodegradable food storage wrap: 9th grade - 2011 School Finalist, 4th place Regional; 10th grade - 2012 School finalist, 2nd place Regional, 2nd place State; 11th grade - 2013 School Finalist, 3rd place Regional.

"Science fair has definitely helped me as a student, but more importantly, it has given me an outlook into what it would be like to work in a science career. It has allowed me to witness the other side of science; instead of reading about great research, I got the opportunity to help create it. I hope to go into environmental science in the future, and science fair is the real reason I want to pursue that type of career." Experiences and results like these clearly indicate that the doctors, engineers, and scientists of tomorrow are getting their start at Shrewsbury High School.

Bye-Bye Volcanoes
Those clay towers filled with baking soda and vinegar are a thing of the past. As Zhang points out, "Science fair has evolved to be much more than a multitude of model volcanoes. Last year, I conducted my experiments in a lab at UMass Amherst, talking to professors and graduate students about my research." An online search will allow you to view Zhang's previ-

research and develop solutions to problems introduced by carbonated beverages in some pipe systems. Pipes, made of a new cheap substitute for PVC, become corroded by these liquids and removing the CO2 works to stop the problem. Reactions like that of coke and Mentos show how easily the CO2 can be released and how much energy it produces. My research was in finding materials that work better than Mentos, and in showing that purifying sewage in this way would be a cost effective solution to the problem. 5 different materials were tested and charcoal filters yielded the best results and were cost effective on a small scale. Results are likely to be replicated on a large scale as well.

Aishwarrya Arivudianambi, Grade 9, 2nd place
Memory Retention through Generations of Dugesia dorotocephala
The purpose of this experiment was to see if acquired knowledge is

CONTINUED, see page 7

A visit to the Wax Museum

LISA PAPAIZIAN
INSTRUCTIONAL COACH
PATON & SPRING STREET
SCHOOLS

History came to life at Spring Street School on Monday, May 6, 2013! Historical figures from all walks of life roamed the Spring Street School corridors as fourth grade students participated in the annual Wax Museum. By reading biographies the fourth graders researched important achievements of their chosen historical persons as well as their early lives, and the challenges they faced. After completing this research, our fourth grade historians used their knowledge to portray these historical figures at a living "Wax Mu-



Pictured above is 4th grade student Emma Kiefer portraying Mr. Walt Disney.

seum". Families, staff, and students visited our museum and pushed buttons that brought the individuals 'to life'. Students then shared their information in a prepared presentation based on their research. As people walked

around they may have noticed Albert Einstein, John F. Kennedy, Clara Barton, Jackie Robinson, and Sally Ride in authentic costumes portraying these characters. Both important and interesting facts were shared about these past presidents, astronauts, world leaders, scientists, and others. It was a great opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge, perform for an audience, and visitors to learn about history in an interesting and interactive way. The experience was a tremendous learning and sharing experience in which students proudly shared their expert knowledge and presentation skills as they learned about role models from the past.

Future engineers striving to learn

WRITTEN BY **DAN GREEN**
GRADE 9 SHS STUDENT
EDITED BY **STEPHEN SHAMGOCIAN**
GRADE 10 SHS STUDENT

My name is Dan Green and I am a freshman at Shrewsbury High School. Currently as one of my electives, I participate in the Introduction to Engineering Design course at Shrewsbury High School, as part of the Project Lead the Way curriculum. With the help of our teachers, Mr. Bartholomew and Mr. Wood, students in this class strive to learn, build, and design independently. Most often we use CAD, Computer Aided Drafting software. The software we use is professional and very modern. During the first part of the year, we built models from scratch and looked at them from every angle, literally adding another dimension to the 3D design process, but it was missing something. We realized that although it was three-dimensional it was missing the greatest aspect of something that is defined as “3D”. We could see it but we could not hold it, we could not manipulate it to our specifications, and we could not really use it or test it. No matter how many hours we spent working on it, the reality was that our design was still in the computer. It wasn’t “real.”

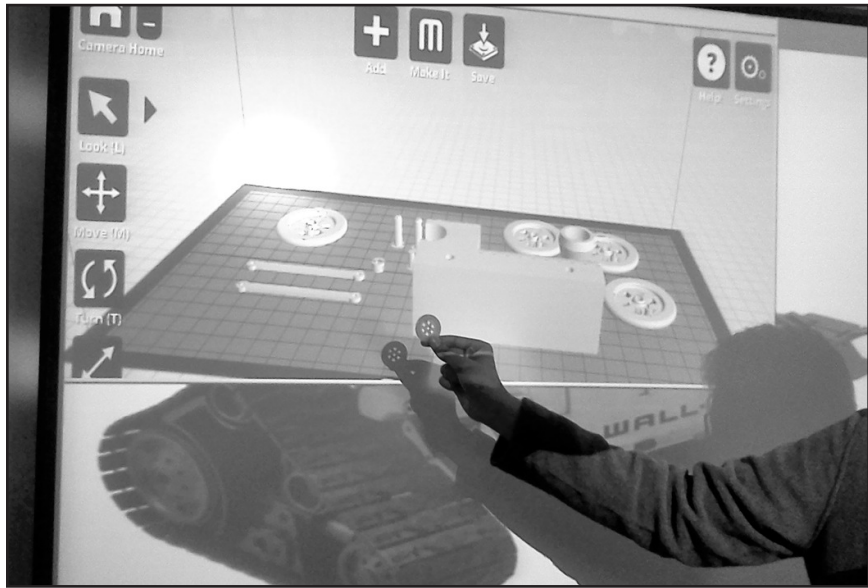
However, like any trained engineer we worked to find a solution to the problem. After some research and discussion, we finally had an idea. Mr. Bartholomew and Mr. Wood worked together to write a grant to the Shrewsbury Education Foundation (SEF) for a 3D printer, a device that has the capability to take the models we created using the computer software, convert it to a language that it could understand, and then build a design made entirely out of plastic. The designs were not life size, but always to scale. Most importantly, it would produce something we could touch and call our own and serve as a model we could test and learn from. After months of anticipation for a response passed, the answer finally came; the SEF accepted our proposal and we obtained the 3D printer. The atmosphere throughout our class was one of excitement. We could see the machine and its capabilities in action.

As engineers we are always trying to learn from our mistakes, find a way to

fix them, and make necessary modifications. In order to do this we need to see our model at work. Each one of our assignments had an objective, but we also had due dates. Up until we received the printer, we could not see if our design would work until we tested the finished product. In many cases, the design would be inoperable and malfunction which would leave us with little to no time to make changes. When we were able to use the printer all of this changed. We could see how our scaled design would respond to certain stimuli prior to building a model. With the new technology, we could now test the model that we constructed on our computer with accuracy. We could do this while still having plenty of time to build the actual model. Most importantly, we had the con-

a great advantage. This ability to plan is what makes a “builder” an “engineer.” The printer impacts the way we learn now, and will continue to carry out the way we learn in the future.

Until we received the printer, most of the projects we had worked on did not involve any actual building. More often than not, we would draft on the computer, which was very useful, but it left a gap in the “engineering process.” Our design was on a computer screen, but it was not really tangible. This, at times, became dull and had a sense of pointlessness. When the printer arrived it brought back that sense of magic we had when we first designed on the computer. We now have a renewed sense of purpose, because everything that we put so much effort into can now be



Pictured above is a student in the Introduction to Engineering Design class holding up a plastic piece created by the 3D printer that was purchased with the grant money from SEF.

fidence that the model would function as expected when we were ready to build it. The software the printer uses even comes with a stress test analyzer, a function that shows how the design will respond to applied pressure in certain areas. This was of great use to us especially when it came to building chairs that were made entirely out of cardboard. Using what we knew about our chair’s design, and where the most pressure would be applied, we could support specific areas of the chair properly. The option of using this simulator allowed us to test our designs without touching a physical model, which for a student, is

brought to life. This sense of being able to create really changed our class and the way it now functions. There is noticeably more life and eagerness to learn due to this machine. In my opinion, this made all the time, planning, and generosity from the Shrewsbury Education Foundation well worth it, not only for my class but also for generations of students to come. I look forward to see how the role of technology along side traditional learning will take place in the future. I would like to personally thank everyone who worked to put this together, especially the Shrewsbury Education Foundation.

Scientists

CONTINUED from page 6

biochemically transferred through asexual reproduction of *Dugesia dorotocephala* (planaria). Planaria were trained to go through a maze. If their path was incorrect, interference (a puff of air) was used to redirect their movement and the number of interferences was recorded. Bisected and regenerated planaria were also put through the maze. From generation 1 to 4, there was a 43.3% reduction in the number of necessary interferences. The results suggest that certain repeated behaviors may become coded into the DNA of an organism and therefore passed down through asexually reproduced generations.

Justin Furuness, Grade 10, 2nd place
Multitasking with Texting’s Effect on Cognition

The purpose for this project was to determine how texting while performing other tasks affected free recall, attention span, processing speed, and memory. Each Participant took the Stroop, Digit Span, Category Based Recall, and the Digit Symbol Coding Tests twice: Once as a control, and once while being interrupted with texting questions every 15 seconds that required a response. Tests were compared using p values for percent changes. People did 25% to 40% worse while multitasking on tests that used visual information. While two tasks use the one brain function, the Central Executive Functions (CEFs) prioritize tasks slower, significantly decreasing all cognitive functions. And while two tasks use two different pathways of the brain, the CEFs perform with equal efficiency.

Xiayue Wang, Grade 10, 3rd place
UV Degradation of PMMA and PS

This project explored the effects of UV light degradation of polystyrene (PS - Styrofoam) and poly methyl methacrylate (PMMA - Plexiglas). Both polymers are a huge part of our daily life, and therefore a huge part of our waste stream. PS and PMMA are not biodegradable, remaining in landfills for decades. If plastic wastes are incinerated, they release toxins into the air. This project focused on how effectively UV light can degrade PS and PMMA, and if UV light can solve the problems posed by PMMA and PS. Results indicate that UV radiation does indeed increase the rate of PMMA and PS degradation.

Isay Katsman, Grade 9, Honorable Mention

The Effect of Pine Wood’s Thickness on its Impact Strength

The Charpy test was used to determine the impact strength of nine pine wood samples. The difference between the initial and final potential energies of the pendulum was calculated to determine the impact strength. After discovering a linear relationship between the thickness of pine-wood and its impact strength ($y = 0.036x$, where x is the thickness in millimeters and y is the impact strength in Joules), a smart phone simulation was created to allow people to perform user-specific simulated tests on wood, instead of actually having to perform the tests in the real world, saving both time and money.

Sonali Razdan, Grade 10, Honorable Mention

Power Generation from Biowaste: The Microbial Fuel Cell

In many rural and remote areas around the world biowaste (cow manure and compost) is readily available, while electricity is not. The exploration of biowaste in the field of power generation using the Microbial Fuel Cell (MFC) is the perfect solution. Out of the four substrates of sucrose, cow manure, vermicompost, and regular compost, it was found that in the presence of *Clostridium sporogenes*, the efficiency of vermicompost was particularly enhanced and without the presence of *Clostridium sporogenes*, the regular compost was the most efficient substrate. This information clearly supported that biowaste can produce electricity when harnessing the MFC technology.

Opportunities granted

CONTINUED from page 3

model to use. Having the students able to see and touch the bones of a full size skeleton helps to make a lasting impression. How awesome for them

to be able to wrap their hands around a full sized skull, feel the weight of the mighty femur, and run their fingers along all 26 vertebrae! “Skully” travels from room to room on his rolling stand visiting the fourth grade classes during the Growth and Development unit of study. As the human skeletal parts are introduced to students, they are able to see and touch these parts, making it so much easier to visualize

what is inside their own bodies. They can identify the placement of the bones and understand better how the skeleton provides us protection, shape and support. The students are able to bend

“Skully’s” knees and elbows helping them to understand how the hinge joint works. They can also see and touch the ball and socket joint of the hip and

ing with this real-to-life model. This is impossible to do with simply a photocopied picture or illustrations from books. Having a full-sized human

skeleton model gives the children a glimpse at what they will never be able to see – what lies inside! “Manny” and “Skully” will have a lasting impact on our elementary students as they will stand up for many years. They will enhance the learning of many students each year for formal Health lessons for grades 2 and 4, as well as informal student inquiry of all students

who see them wondering the halls! We owe a big THANK YOU to the SEF for funding this project. The students and I couldn’t be more thrilled!



Pictured above is 4th grade student Holly Hruskoci from Walter J. Paton School with “Manny” the life-sized human torso model purchased with grant money.

shoulder illustrating to them how their own leg and arm are able to move in all directions as apposed to the simpler bend of the elbow and knee. Students make a real life connection when work-

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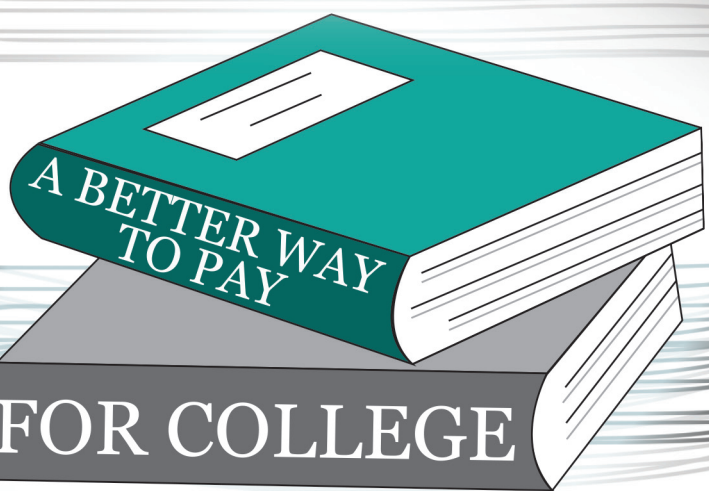
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